



MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORKSESSION

NO. 5

DEPT.: / Community Planning and Development Services DATE: October 6, 2004

CONTACT: Arthur D. Chambers, AICP, Director, CPDS

SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION:

Environmental Graphics for the Town Square Project

ORDER OF DISCUSSION:

1. Presentation by Selbert Perkins
2. Next steps

GENERAL DIRECTION SOUGHT AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED:

Selbert Perkins Design was selected to assist the City, RD Rockville, Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT) and Street-Works in designing an environmental graphics plan for the Town Square project. After several discussions with design professionals, City staff, Peerless, and others, Selbert Perkins prepared a draft plan. That plan has been circulated to the Mayor and Council and the Art In Town Center Task Force (ATCTF). Others in the community have also had the opportunity to review the plan. Written comments have previously been distributed to the Mayor and Council. Copies of the draft environmental graphics plans were distributed to the Mayor and Council in June.

On September 13, the Mayor and Council briefly discussed the plan and the citizen comments. At that meeting, it was decided that it would be beneficial to have Selbert Perkins discuss how they created the draft environmental graphics plan. Representatives from Selbert Perkins will be at the joint worksession. Selbert Perkins have indicated that the goal of the environmental graphics program is to clearly identify Rockville Town Square, direct people throughout the development, and to create spaces that inform and engage visitors. Themes related to Rockville and its history were chosen to make the Town Square a unique place that invites people to gather, interact and be inspired.

It should be noted that the environmental graphics are not considered art, but are used to help create a "sense of place" through signage, graphics, symbols, etc. Having consistent signage, as well as clear directions to parking and other major attractions, will be important to people coming to Town Center. Likewise, the introduction of themes and other information (quotes, symbols, etc.) will help create the impression of Town Square as an identifiable place.

The type and location of public art in Town Center is being addressed by the Art in Town Center Task Force. That Task Force also will be working with the Cultural Arts Commission in the process for soliciting and acquiring works of art. The Town Square project is contributing funds for public art, which will be used in conjunction with other City funds (Art in Public Places and Art in Public Architecture). Funding of the environmental graphics is provided by the Town Square project

and FRIT.

As with most projects with a multitude of parts and goals, it is difficult to successfully integrate the architecture, landscaping, signage, art, etc. Additionally, it is difficult to achieve universal concurrence on each item in the plan. To date, the most discussion (or lack of consensus) has been about the three large symbols in the plaza area. In general, there have been favorable responses on the pylons, quotes, notes, alphabets and signage. The next stage is to obtain concurrence from the Mayor and Council so a final plan can be completed and work started on the fabrication of the various items.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

None.